

A

Journal,
Kept by H. K. Whitney, during
the journey and sojourn of
the church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints
in the wilderness,
Anno Domini,

1846.

(Continued.)

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Monday the 20th - Fast day - Bro. Smith,
and Hutchinson, went over the river to the
other camp to join the rest of the band
in a party, which they hold over here
to-day - as some of us could not well
go, we did not make a party too,
and accordingly got a quantity of bushes
and made a house before our tent - we
commenced dancing last noon, and kept
it up till supper time - then ad-
joined till about 10 and danced
till about 12 and dismissed having had
a good time, each enjoying himself
satisfied with our own affluence -
Lavin's wife came back this evening - Pete
does and the other two girls do not yet,
To-day we were visited by two men from
the village who came here on horseback.
Their names are Beach and Harding.

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16 July-16 August 1846

A
JOURNAL
KEPT BY H. K. WHITNEY, DURING
THE JOURNEY AND SOJOURN OF
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
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(CONTINUED.)

JULY 1846

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THURSDAY THE 16TH

Rather cool weather The camp of Heber, where we now are contains at this time, 22 wagons, and 25 tents A meeting was called this morning – The people were told to choose whether they would go over the Mountains with Bro. Miller, to Grand Island, or to go back on the other side of the river – The most of them were for going on with Miller⁵³ – There was also a call made for more volunteers for the war – Bro. K. father and Brigham started to go over the river to the camp on the Bluffs, there to hold another council there they intended with some of the Twelve to go up the river some distance to seek a location for us this winter – Wm. Mary, Helen Sarah S. Harriet and myself accompanied them on mules to the Bluffs – William took the carriage back, and returned in the evening on horseback – After going about a mile and a half from the ferry on the other side, the brethren were met by a number of the Twelve and others going down to the village – being near Bro. Geo. A's. camp they stopt there and held council, – I rode on with the girls, and we reached the camp late in the afternoon – found a number of our old acquaintances, here – viz: Bro. Pierce Bro. [Joseph Wellington] Coolidge and a number of others – after a while the brethren arrived – Helen and myself staid with Bro. Coolidge's folk's all night – About midnight Wm came over bringing Vilate and Nancy Green –

Here we found a number of our old acquaintances—among them were Bros. Robert Pierce and Cooledge and families. This camp was much larger than ours and consisted principally of those who left Nauvoo long after our departure. Horace, myself, and Sarah Lawrence stopped with Bro. Cooledge's folks that night.

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1 June 1884, p. 2

FRIDAY THE 17TH

A meeting was called this morning, and considerable business done – there was quite a subscription taken in behalf of Brother [William] Yokum a brother who lost a limb in the

53. Central to the original 1846 exodus plan was to encamp most of the Saints at Grand Island in the summer. By the time Brigham Young and the vanguard company reached the Missouri River, it was clear that most of the Saints would be staying at Garden Grove, Mount Pisgah, and the Missouri. However, Brigham Young did instruct George Miller and his companions to explore the possibility of a late Grand Island encampment. The island proved not to be nearly as habitable as previously reported. Furthermore, travel getting there was difficult along the Platte River bottoms, and the area seemed to be a center of warfare between the Sioux and Pawnee Indian tribes. Upon arrival at the island, Miller was invited by the Punkaw (Ponca) Indian tribe to settle near their villages, some two hundred miles north on the Niobrara (Vermilion) River, which invitation he accepted. Grand Island, Nebraska, is located on the Platte River. Named "La Grande Isle" by French fur traders in the early 1800s, Grand Island is today the fourth largest city in Nebraska.

Missouri persecutions, and had suffered a great deal. Some gave money, some flour, &c. – Brigham father Bro. K. and a number of others intend starting and going 15 miles up the river this afternoon – Wm and myself and the girls took a short ride into the country this forenoon, and about 3 P. M. we started for home which we reached about sunset – The camp we visited is a much larger one than ours, and consists principally of those who left Nauvoo a long time after our departure –

SATURDAY THE 18TH

Warm and pleasant – towards evening father returned – Brigham and Bro. K. had got back as far as the camp on the Bluff – they had been some 15 or 20 miles up the river, but not finding any suitable place to winter, they came back, previously sending on 6 men in search of some good place to stop this winter –



George Miller (1794–1856), associate presiding bishop, member of the Council of Fifty, trail-blazer and scout, and Brigham Young antagonist. Image from H. W. Mills, "De Tal Palo Tal Astilla," Annual Historical Society of Southern California 10, no. 3 (1917), found between 112–13.

SUNDAY THE 19TH

Started on foot this morning to go to the village on the other side of the river to see some old friends that had enlisted, understanding that they intend leaving to-morrow – I had not proceeded far before I met Bro. B. Y. and K. returning to the camp – overtook Peter at the Ferry who, in company with 3 of the girls had started for the Bluffs some time before I did – I went over with the girls in a skiff leaving Peter to take charge of the mules till I could raise a sufficient number of men to row the large boat with them over – I had raised a number of men, and got them down to the shore when I perceived the boat starting off from the other shore, they having succeeded in getting men on that side – Peter and the girls went on to the Bluffs where they intend to stop all night – I remained till late in the afternoon at the village and then returned home on foot in company with Bro. Egan – just at sunset as we arrived at the camp met Bro. Brigham K. and Richards on their way back over the river where they intend holding another council – they had held a meeting here to-day in order to find out who were going over the mountains, and who were not going to Grand – Island – they made out some 50 wagons, which were to go ahead, join Miller, and proceed with him over the mountains – Brigham spoke severely of the brethren who being set to watch cattle, fell asleep at their posts, and suffered them to run into the Indians' cornfields – he said that such men not fit to fill the slough holes of hell, and those found guilty of like acts again should be expelled from the camp of Israel for they were a perfect disgrace to us

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MONDAY THE 20TH

Fine day – Bro. Smithies and Hutchinson, went over the river to the other camp to join the rest of the Band in a party, which they hold over there to-day – as some of us could not well go, we determined to make a party too, and accordingly got a quantity of bushes and made a bower before our tent – we commenced dancing about noon, and kept it up till supper-time, we then adjourned till evening, when we met and danced till about 10, and dismissed having had a good time, each one expressing himself satisfied with our scene of festivity – Davis' wife came back this evening – Pete does and the other two girls does not yet come To-day we were visited by two men from the village who came here on horseback. Their names are Beach and [John J.] Harding – they are old residents there – Mr. Beach informed me that the name of the creek in the vicinity is Butterfly we hear that Bishop Miller is some 150 miles distant, and is still going ahead – we heard the other day that Bro. Wm Cutler died of the Small Pox at Nauvoo, some time since, but know nothing of the truth of the report –

This was the farewell ball which Col. Kane so touchingly described to the “Historical Society of Pennsylvania.”⁵⁴ My parents and a great number were there, both old and young, but there were also many more who did not attend it. There were not horses enough for all to ride, and we being among the number who remained behind were determined to make a party, too, and accordingly the boys got a quantity of bushes and made a bower before our tent, and commenced dancing about noon and continued till supper time. We then adjourned till evening, when we met and danced till about ten o'clock, and then dismissed, having had a good time, and all expressing themselves satisfied with our scene of festivity. We could furnish our own music, and we often danced “by the light of the moon,” which was then shining upon us in all its glory like one bright chandelier. I remember many an evening after the cares and bustle of the day were over, when numbers of the youth would gather outside the tents, and as chairs were rare luxuries, the majority resorted to wagon tongues, ox-yokes, provision chests and that sort of appliances in camp life, where we enjoyed a quiet entertainment of songs, music, etc. Horace excelled as a flutist, and the sweet strains that flowed soft and mellow from his instrument was owing much to his father's training. When a small boy, in Kirtland, he was presented with a fife by Orson Hyde, who was then a clerk in his father's store, but his incessant practice wearied his father and everybody within the hearing of it. And seeing his determination to learn the instrument his father bought him a flute the next time he went to New York for goods. John F. Boynton, one of the first quorum of the twelve, who stopped at his father's a great deal, gave him his first lessons on the flute, and his father would always correct him if he heard him play otherwise than smoothly. He also possessed an excellent voice for singing, as well as a generous supply of wit and humor, and telling anecdotes was one of his best fortes; and there were others of this class as well as some superior lady singers, and by this means we often drove away, dull care

54. See Thomas L. Kane, *The Mormons: A Discourse Delivered Before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, March 16, 1850* (Philadelphia: King & Baird, printers, 1850).

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and cheered the aged and the drooping hearts, making lighter their burdens. One of the best songs that we used to hear was the “Jewish Maid,” which one of our girls could sing as sweetly as did Miss Devine at the Point, the evening before the departure of the battalion boys, which was referred to by the late Thomas L. Kane, but who, it seems, was unable to obtain the song except the following lines, which he gives as “a version of the text touching to all earthly wanderers.”

“By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept,
We wept when we remembered Zion.”

Bro John Kay was the first to introduce this song to us in Nauvoo, but the chorus was changed, and instead of singing

“No more shall the children of Judah sing,”
“Again shall the children of Judah
Sing the lays of a happy time.”

This was sung according to the faith of the Saints, who did not weep when they “remembered Zion,” for Zion they had brought with them.⁵⁵

The same day that we held our festival we were visited by two men from the village, who came on horseback, their names being Beach and Harding. They were old residents there. Mr. Beach informed us that the name of the creek in that vicinity was “Butterfly.”

Woman's Exponent, vol. 13, no. 2,
15 June 1884, p. 10

TUESDAY THE 21ST

Commenced raining about 8 o'clock this morning, and rained till 11 o'clock a.m. – The girls got back this afternoon; also Peter – they bro't the news that 4 of the company started from the village to-day, and that the 5th is to start to-morrow – Bro. K. also came back this evening. C. L. W. [Clark Lyman Whitney] has got over the river with his team, and has sent word to us to come and help him up – for which purpose a number of teams are going down to-morrow – He abused father the other day in the vilest manner, calling him a damned scoundrel, and using other opprobrious [*sic*] epithets of a most unmanly nature, to a man who has always tried to sustain him thro' evil and good report, and who has exerted himself in his behalf in many ways in times that are past and gone – Not to repay ingratitude with unkindness, father determined to return good for evil, and accordingly intends to-morrow sending a number of cattle to his assistance –

55. The song “Jewish Maid” had been introduced to the Saints in Nauvoo by their most popular singer and songwriter, John Kay. According to Horace Whitney, Kay changed the words to the chorus somewhat so that instead of singing “By the Rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept, we wept when we remembered Zion,” it read, “Again shall the children of Judah sing the lays of happy time.” See Helen Mar Whitney, “Our Travels Beyond the Mississippi,” *Woman's Exponent* 13, no. 2 (15 June 1884): 10.

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The folks returned home and brought the news that four companies started from the village that day, and the fifth was to start on the morrow. It is not pleasant to dwell on the dark side, nor is it my intention now to rehearse the scenes of sorrow and additional suffering of wives and children, which was forced upon them by the cruel requisition made upon our people at that time by this government, after suffering us to be ruthlessly driven out from their midst, I will only mention the case of Sister Ed. Martin, which may illustrate, the pitiful condition under which many more were left with families.

Brother Martin had just buried a newborn infant, and left his wife sick, not knowing who was to take care of her, and there was no time to make any arrangement for her comfort, and they had to leave all in the hands of God and their friends. And who are more capable of singing and sensing the full meaning of the sweet and touching song, "Hard times, hard times come again no more" than the ones who remember those gloomy days and scenes of want and suffering that were experienced by the Saints who were left in Winter Quarters.

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WEDNESDAY THE 22^D

Rained a little this morning before we were up – continued showery thro' the day – I went ahead on the road about a mile, to watch the Indian cornfields lest the cattle shall break in to them – these are to be found on either side of Butterfly Creek for some distance up and down that stream – In the making of their fields, they have not used the plough, but selecting the softest ground (which is to be found on the margin of these streams) with little or no sod, they have simply cut down the weeds with their hoes and then put in their corn – In this way they leave it giving it no farther attention till they are ready to harvest it, or rather, when they return from their hunting expedition they resort to these fields for roasting ears, which they are very fond of:– if any is left after that, they bury it deep in the ground, where it remains during the winter – I had considerable difficulty in keeping the cattle away from the fields – another thing somewhat perplexed me, – Quite a number of teams from Brigham's camp, as well as our own, started to-day, and I had all I could do, to keep the cattle of our camp from crossing the creek, and following them off – About noon, Brigham, Bro. K., & Dr. Richards passed by me in a carriage on their way to the Elk Horn, a branch of the Platte River in order to survey the face of the country Those 6 men, before spoken of as having been sent the other day up the Missouri River on the other side to select a location returned, and reported that they had been some distance up the river but had been entirely unsuccessful in finding a suitable place to winter the country being no more favorable for that purpose than the place where we now are⁵⁶ – Accordingly Brigham advised the brethren in council

56. The Mormons first stopped at a temporary resting place, recommended by George Miller, on the Petit Papillion Creek, which they called Cold Springs or Butterfly Bluff. Situated four miles northwest of the ferry landing and fifteen miles above Bellevue, Cold Springs served as camp headquarters and provided a much needed rest during that hot, sweltering July. Local historian Gail Holmes believes that Cold Springs

on Monday last at the Bluffs, to disperse themselves among the hills and bottoms and remain there this winter – While out to-day, I set my hook and line and caught 6 very fine catfish, one of which weighed 4 or 5 lbs. The red oxen, which I have hitherto drove are about being exchanged for a yoke of 4 year old steers – that is if the man sticks to his bargain, but this is not certain. Bro. K. exchanged his horse Charly for 1 yoke of oxen a cow and heifer; and another old horse for another yoke – to-day Hans was fitted out with a wagon and team to accompany his father-in-law over the mountains – they intend starting to-morrow Geo. Billings came to drive team for Bro. K. –

THURSDAY THE 23^d

Fine and pleasant – tho' extremely warm – Bro. Hans, with his father-in-law, and a number of others, started for the mountains, but on coming to the creek, were obliged to build a bridge before crossing, the late rains having considerably swollen the stream – consequently had to camp on the banks on this side – Bro. K., and Brigham returned to day from the Elk-Horn⁵⁷ – Bro. K. tells me it is about 18 miles to the place where they had been – this stream is about 150 feet wide, and about 3 ft. deep and the only present means of crossing, is on a raft, composed of logs put together in a rough manner, and a very slow way it is, only one wagon going over at a time, the raft dragging on the bottom, and when they get to the other shore they are obliged to take hold of it with their hands, and pull it up on the shore in order for the teams to get off Just as Bro. K. arrived, Bro. Woodruff, Bro. Taylor, Little, and [Joseph] Horn came here in pursuance to previous arrangement to hold council, but it being so late they concluded not to hold any tonight Bro. Taylor, Woodruff, and Horn remained with us all night, Helen giving up her bed for the purpose – Bro. K. rode over to the creek to organize that company before they go on, which will be in the morning, as the bridge will be done by that time – He appointed Hiram Clark captain of fifty and Bro. Billings and N.[oah Willis] Bartholomew as his counsellors – We hear that a number of Indians rode over to see their corn this afternoon, and on discovering it to be trodden down by the cattle were very angry, and for fear that they might retaliate by taking some of our cattle, every man in the camp was ordered out to assist in driving in the cattle and yoking them up, which was done. Bro. K. intends to send the most of the camp ahead to-morrow in order to build a bridge over the Elk Horn. This is one of the objects of council to morrow –

was just north of Interstate 80, and near the corner of 61st and Patterson Streets in Omaha. See Gail George Holmes, "Winter Quarters Revisited: Untold Stories of the Seven-Year Stay of the Mormons in the Missouri Valley 1846–53," 19–20; see also Holmes's leaflet, *Historic Mormon Sites to Visit in Greater Omaha—Council Bluffs*.

57. The Elkhorn River, 292 miles long, is one of the largest tributaries of the Platte River, originating in the eastern Sandhills of Nebraska, and merging into the Platte just southwest of Omaha.

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FRIDAY THE 24TH

Fine and pleasant – This morning, pursuant to agreement the Twelve, with father, met in council – they assembled on the hill, back of the camp some distance – To-day our cattle remain yoked, and two men are sent out to herd them – some have neglected, to bring in their cattle and herd them, consequently have yet to keep a watch upon the corn – I went myself on that duty this afternoon – the bridge they have built is a very good one – a number of brethren started from here to day – but 3 or 4 families remain, besides Bro. K's. and father's families –

SATURDAY THE 25TH

Warm and pleasant – This being the 23^d anniversary of my birthday, Mother, Sarah Ann and Orson took supper with us at Bro. K's. tent – To-day Bro. Orson Hyde moved back over the river – where he intends to leave his family till his return from England, whither he is immediately going with Parley and Bro. Taylor⁵⁸ – Bro. Woodruff is about moving over this side of the M. River Bro. K. borrowed \$100 in gold of a brother by the name of Halmagh Van Wagoner [Halmagh John Van Wagoner] – I wrote the note for the amount for Bro. K., which was to be paid on demand about 11 o'clock at night it commenced raining and continued about half an hour accompanied by considerable thunder and lightning – We hear that one of the soldier-brethren has died since their departure from the village – he is said to have been the son [likely Albert Warren Dunham] of the late General [Jonathan] Dunham, of the Nauvoo Police, who died about a year ago while on a mission among the Indians Harriet Sanders is quite unwell –

SUNDAY THE 26TH

Fair weather – Bro. K. and father sent 4 yoke of oxen to the river each to assist Bro. Woodruff up – Bro. Coolidge with his Omnibus came in the afternoon, Bro. Cushing driving it for him, he being quite sick at this time – Wm and some of the rest of the boys got back from the river, where they went this afternoon about 2 o'clock in the morning bringing up the remainder of Bro. Coolidge's wagons – Brigham and Bro. K and father also went over the river to-day,

58. Apostles Parley P. Pratt and John Taylor and later Wilford Woodruff, who would join them, were dispatched to England on a very delicate mission to recover lost monies. Specifically, their mission was to recover funds embezzled by Reuben Hedlock, confront James Strang's missionaries who were then cultivating a large following, and return with the best surveying instruments possible in preparation for their spring 1847 move west. They returned in late March 1847 with 469 gold sovereigns representing a fraction of the total tithes from the British Saints. They also brought with them almost five hundred dollars' worth of astronomical and surveying instruments which would prove very useful to Brigham Young and his pioneers in their spring 1847 exodus. See Richard E. Bennett, "We Might Have Gone to Vancouver's Island: The Mormon Exodus, British Emigration, and the Pacific Northwest," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: Western Canada*, ed. Dennis A. Wright et al. (Provo, UT: Department of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University, 2000), 13–34.

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they did not come back to-night – Bro. Harrison Burgess took the lead of a meeting which we held here to day under our bower, in front of the tent, by Bro K's request –

MONDAY THE 27TH

Weather still fine – to-day went with the girls to the creek to wash – a number of the boys and girls went fishing at the same time – While there – saw a number of teams crossing the bridge on their way back – there were 10 wagons there proved to be the property of men who have just left the Pawnee village about 120 miles above here in consequence of the hostility of the Indians, where they have lived a number of years – they are going to the village below on this side the Missouri River, whither a number of their company had already preceded them Among those we saw, were 4 wagons and 6 men belonging to Bro. Miller, who is taking a load back for them, and receive in payment for the same 300 bushels of grain, mostly wheat I believe – the occasion of their leaving is this:– A hostile tribe of Indians, called the Punksaws, who are constantly roving about, and are much addicted to thieving have lately made their appearance at the Pawnee village, and molested them so much by their thieving operations, and otherwise, that they were obliged to leave, the Indians having previously stolen all their horses⁵⁹ – the settlement of men who have thus left formerly consisted of 8 families:– viz: 3 Missourians, 3 farmers, 1 blacksmith, and a school teacher commissioned by government



Ponca Indian Village (undated). Wyoming State Archives.

59. The Ponca (Cut-throat) Indians are a Midwestern Native American tribe of the Dhegihan branch of the Sioux. They originated in the Ohio River Valley. One branch moved south to Oklahoma; the other to Nebraska.

– the school teacher had under his direction some 20 Pawnee children who have left with him to go down to the said village, and whom he is educating at the expense of government – some of Bro. Miller’s men told me that the Pawnee village was totally vacated, they having gone out on a hunting expedition – they told me furthermore that they were living on the fat of the land, there being plenty of garden sauce, such as potatoes, onions, peas, &c., which the settlers had left behind, not being able to bring them away⁶⁰ – the brethren who were sent on to build the bridge at the Elk Horn, have done nothing about it but have gone on – A piece of unexpected good fortune lately happened to father – When his boys went down into the country some time ago after provision, he sent 89 dollars for the same, but thro’ the mismanagement of the agent, he did not get more than half he wanted, and consequently, would have been unable to prosecute the journey, had it not been, that the Lord, seemingly on purpose to repair this misfortune or injury, put forth his hand in his behalf – the circumstances were these – Bro. Hyde, being about to depart for England, just before crossing the river again with his family, let him have 2 yoke of oxen, 10 barrels of flour, and a bushel and a half of beans, which, to use his own phrase, “has completely set him on his legs again,” and he is now fitted out to his heart’s content – Brigham Bro. K. and father got back from the camp on the other side of the river this evening – While there, father received a wanton insult from Bro. Taylor – he happened to be at his tent at about the dinner hour, also, Brigham and Heber and one or two others – when they all set down at the table by his invitation, except father, whom he never once condescended to notice by word or look – the occasion of this was probably some personal pique, tho’ father knows of no such that can possibly exist in reason – Rained a little during the night – Bro. K. says there are about 150 wagons ready to cross the river, and the passage this side is completely blocked up with wagons and intends sending down 12 or 15 yoke oxen tomorrow to assist in pulling them up the hill – Forgot to name, at the same time that Bro Hyde let father have those things above named, Parley gave him 30 dollars in gold, in exchange for the same amount of incurrent [*sic*] eastern (Maine) money What more particularly surprised father in the conduct of Bro. Taylor, is the fact, that, previous to the circumstance above mentioned he had treated him with the most uniform politeness, and the professed strongest friendship towards him in public and private, forming a great contrast to the unprovoked and wanton insult he gave him the other day in the company of their mutual friends and brethren –

60. George Miller eventually broke with the Saints at Winter Quarters after a serious disagreement with Brigham Young over which route to follow to the Rocky Mountains. Young favored the more southerly route up the Platte, to the Sweetwater, and over South Pass, while Miller preferred following the Vermillion to the Tongue River country and thence to Oregon. The real issue, however, was more personality than geography. Miller and his tagalong, James Emmett, both members of the Council of Fifty, believed they had as much authority to direct the exodus as Young did. Miller eventually drifted down to join the Lyman Wight colony in Texas, and then later James Strang in Beaver Island, Michigan. Emmett died in California, while Miller is buried in Marengo, McHenry County, northeast Illinois.

TUESDAY THE 28TH

Beautiful Morning – About 2 o'clock P. M. it commenced raining, and continued showery thro the day and night accompanied by considerable thunder and lightning – it seemed to pour down almost perpendicularly and in perfect torrents so that there was not a wagon but that the rain penetrated thro' the cover thereof, and wet all the bed clothing &c. therein – This morning Bro. K. called a meeting to see how many of the brethren would go down the river with their teams to help those wagons on this side, out of the valley up the hill – a number volunteered, and the meeting was dismissed – About a dozen of Indians of the Otoes tribe including their chief came here this afternoon on horseback they had some moccasins, which they were very anxious to “swap,” – one of them had a quantity of beef on his horse which Brigham had given them⁶¹ – Colonel Kane, the gentleman who negotiated with us for the troops, for the Mexican expedition left here last Monday, for Grand Island, where there is some talk of our soon going – He intends to stay with us and in our vicinity, till he can write a sketch of our history, which he intends to present to the President on his return to Washington Bro. Woodruff is encamped within a short distance of us towards Brigham's camp⁶² –

This was one of the trials calculated to test one's patience, a virtue which had been considerably exercised during the five months that we had spent picking and plodding our way under difficulties which no language can describe, therefore must leave it for imagination to do.

Woman's Exponent, vol. 13, no. 3,
1 July 1884, p. 18

WEDNESDAY THE 29TH

This morning fine and pleasant, the atmosphere sweet & pure, in contrast to the salty heat of yesterday – almost every wagon in the camp was unloaded in order to dry the things therein – Bro. King, Whitney, Jacob Frazier. G. Billings, and myself went over the creek after grapes, while they were gathering which I caught 3 or 4 good sized cat-fish – Bro. K. & Brigham went over the river to-day to make some arrangements about the brethren starting for England

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61. The Otoe Indian tribe was once part of the Winnebago Sioux. Splitting off from the parent tribes, they migrated to areas south and west of the Great Lakes where they adopted the horse culture and nomadic lifestyle of the Great Plains, making the bison central to their diet. Between 1817 and 1841 they lived near the mouth of the Platte River. In 1854 the Otoe ceded most of the land south of that river, in eastern Nebraska, to the U.S. by treaty. Today, most Otoe Indians live in Noble and Pawnee counties in Oklahoma. The classic introduction to the history of North American Indian tribes, including the Otoe Indians, remains Thomas L. McKenney, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: J. T. Boen, 1848–50).
62. Fort Leavenworth was built in 1827 by Colonel Henry Leavenworth to protect fur traders and to keep peace with the Native Americans. The oldest active United States Army post west of Washington, D.C., it is located in Leavenworth County, Kansas. It served as the outfitting point for the Mormon Battalion in 1846. See George H. Walton, *Sentinel of the Plains: Fort Leavenworth and the American West* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973).

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Thomas L. Kane, Distant View of the Horn Campground Horseback July 29th (?) 1846. Thomas L. Kane Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.



Thomas L. Kane, My Waggon—The First Camp of the Distant Prairie of the Platte July 29th (?) 1846. Thomas L. Kane Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

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– they (Bro. Hyde Taylor & Parley) intend starting to-morrow Since we have been lying still, our cattle have suffered from the “footrot” caused either by the mud or grass getting between their hoofs – while we are travelling, we have never been troubled with it – the remedy we make use of, is to pour melted rosin into the hoof, after first pulling a rope backward and forward thro’ it to get out the filth – Bro. K. returned this evening, about dark –

THURSDAY THE 30TH

Warm day – about sunset, a shower came up, and it continued raining at intervals, thro’ the night – Bro. Lott, with his teams got up yesterday and to day – he has considerable church property with him, some cattle, sheep, &c., &c.– Bro. K. and wife went over the river to visit a farm – they returned this evening, – bringing quite a quantity of green corn – first that we have seen that is fit to eat – Forgot to mention, that during the storm on Tuesday evening, an ox belonging to a Bro. [Horace S.] Eldridge was struck by lightning, and instantly killed – Another meeting was held this morning, and a number of teams sent down to pull up the wagons of those who are crossing the river all the time, and are constantly swelling the size of our camp with their numbers – Bro. [Thomas] More, one of father’s children, with his family arrived yesterday, and a number of others. –

FRIDAY THE 31ST

Rained a little this morning – continued cloudy and warm thro’ the day with considerable thunder – Another meeting called this morning, and a number of those who have not yet been were sent to the river to work – Bro. K. and Brigham went down also – while they were at the river the Steamboat “General Brooks” came down, and stopt at the village on this side, two miles below the Ferry – Bros. Parley, Hyde, Taylor, R. Pierce and Bro Little came over in the skiff, took in Brigham and Bro. K., and went down the river to overtake the boat, but when they got to the village, the steamboat had left, consequently, Bro. Taylor Hyde and Parley were obliged to go down in a flat-boat in company with some Missourians till they can overtake a steamboat – We learn, that the “General Brooks” was loaded down with the choicest kind of furs – she also had on board two grizzly bears and a young buffalo, which they caught while they were swimming the river, some 4 or 500 miles above here⁶³ – Father [Alpheus] Cutler, with his family, arrived to-day, and encamped on a hill a little beyond us–

SATURDAY THE 1ST OF AUGUST

Quite a warm windy day – Another lot of men sent down to the river this morning with teams – Bro. Cahoon, Bro. Yearsly, and a number of others came up to day – Bro. John

63. The *General Brooks* steamboat, then under the command of Captain Joseph Throckmorton, navigated the Missouri River. The Upper Missouri River above Fort Benton (known as Fort Lewis before 1850) was considered unnavigable, so the majority of steamboats plied only the lower part of the river. See William E. Lass, *A History of Steamboating on the Upper Missouri River* (University of Nebraska Press, 1962).

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Artist unknown, Steamboats on the Missouri River.

Higbee is also here – To-day a number of the Otoe Indians were here – they had a lot of corn with them which they had stolen from the cornfields of the Mohaws, close by here – The Otoes are a mean, thievery race, and are also very cunning, which they showed particularly

in this case, knowing that the taking of the corn would be laid on to us by the Mohaws– Father Mother and little Carlos are quite sick to-day – Father took cold sitting up and watching with mother, who was very sick during the last night, but is a little better to-day

SUNDAY THE 2^D

Fair day – Brigham and Bro. K. and some others, took a trip up the river on this side to day, to find out a nearer road to the place where they want to go – they returned and held a council this afternoon – it is contemplated to start on to-morrow or next day and go to some place to settle down and prepare for winter – Father and mother are considerably better than they were yesterday To-day, put up my little tent again; which we have not before used since I returned from the trading expedition in the country – Sarah Ann, Helen, Mary Houston, Geo. Billings and myself, by the advice and arrangement of Bro. K. are to occupy it, and intends to take J. C. K's tent and put Wm and some others into it, thus dividing the family into 3 messes, and making it more agreeable and convenient to all –

MONDAY THE 3^D

The weather still fine and pleasant – Bro. K sent 10 yoke of oxen down to the river to help up Bro. Clayton, and family – Whitney, & myself went to the “Little Butterfly Creek, with the girls to day to assist them in washing – returned about sunset pretty well tired out – Bro Brigham let Bro. K. have a quantity of beef to-day, an ox of his having jumped off from a bridge and broke his neck this forenoon – it is the intention to take an early start to-morrow-morning, and go on – the boys, during our absence at the creek, have been unloading, and reloading, and making other arrangements necessary for our early departure. This evening, Bro. K. called the people of the camp together, told them the intention of moving in the morning, and received their vote and acquiescence in the same. He told them that he and Brigham had gone up the river 5 miles yesterday and had found out a good road on the “divide” between the Missouri, and Elk Horn Rivers, and which divide, for aught he knew, might continue 100 miles – He further told them that he intended going till he found a suitable place to stop and winter – He had no doubt of finding some good location on some of the bottoms; where we could build our houses for the winter, and our families meanwhile live on highlands or bluffs till cool weather. These bottoms abound in pea-vines,

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which will be first rate forage for our cattle, till winter, when he told them they could swim them over the river, or take them over on the ice, into the rush bottoms to feed⁶⁴ – Forgot to mention the death of a child [John Harris Harley] of Bro. [Edwin] Harley's which happened on Sunday –

TUESDAY THE 4TH

Fair day – took a tolerably early start this morning, and travelled about 8 miles and encamped on the prairie about the middle of the afternoon – found a spring of water about half a mile off – from here we could see the Missouri River, about a mile off, also our former place of encampment on the opposite side on the Bluffs, where, as far as we could judge, a number of families yet remain Bro. K. and Father Cutler went ahead on horseback a short distance to discover what kind of a country was ahead – could not go further on account of its being most night – they returned bringing word that to the next timber they supposed it was 5 miles – Brigham did not come up with us to-night – don't know whether he started or not –

WEDNESDAY THE 5TH

Started tolerably early this morning, travelled about 5 ms. And encamped about 1 P. M. near the beforementioned timber, and a spring at the head of a ravine close by – here we shall probably remain a day or two, till Bro. K. can make a survey of the country, and find out some good place to stop Colonel Kane arrived this evening – he had been to Grand Island, where he received a letter from Brigham informing him that the brethren had given up the idea of moving up that way; so he tho't he would come back; There is a mound in the vicinity about $\frac{1}{4}$ a mile off which Bro. K. and Colonel Kane noticed in an short ramble which they took last evening, and the Colonel expressed a desire: that some of the men should take spades, in the morning proceed thither and see what could be found by excavating it⁶⁵ – I

64. Under the direction of Asahel Lathrop, the Saints wintered most of their cattle (over ten thousand head) in a small encampment in the lush growing "pea-vines" region several miles north of Winter Quarters. Formerly part of George Miller's Ponca camp, Lathrop became disenchanted with Miller's leadership and left the Niobrara settlement with ten other families to come to Winter Quarters. Having traveled the west banks of the Missouri for two hundred miles, he recommended his tiny settlement as an ideal grazing ground for the church cattle at a spot roughly equidistant between Winter Quarters and the Niobrara River. The rush bottoms along the Missouri above Winter Quarters were covered with a growth of rushes or "jointed grass" that stayed green most of the winter. Such growth is now almost extinct. Lathrop's herd was probably located just east of Tekamah, Burt County, Nebraska. Charles Kelley, ed., *Journals of John D. Lee, 1846-1847 and 1859* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984), 23, editor's note.

65. Recent research conducted by the Nebraska State Historical Society, Archaeology Division, along the Papillion Creek indicates that this mound site was very likely that of Otoe Indians buried there some 250-500 years ago. For a fine introduction to the highly debatable topic of North American Indian origins see Lee Eldridge Huddleston, *Origins of the American Indians: European Concepts, 1492-1729* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967). More specific to Indian mound building, see Robert Silverberg, *Mound Builders of Ancient America: The Archaeology of a Myth* (New York: New York Graphic Society, 1968). For a more recent study of Pawnee Indian burial grounds and mounds, see Rodger C. Echo-Hawk and Walter R. Echo-Hawk, *Battlefields and Burial Grounds: The Indian Struggle to Protect Ancestral Graves in the United States*

understand, he intends soon leaving for the east – We formed our wagons in a circle, so to make an enclosure for our horses –

The first time we met Col. Kane was on the 5th of August, just after our wagons were formed in a circle so as to make an enclosure for horses. The meeting was somewhat peculiar.

My sister-in-law and I being more than weary that day with the sun beating down and not a shade of any kind to screen us from its scorching rays, we were considerably out of sorts, and were just giving expression to some of our thoughts and feelings, in consequence of the unpleasant circumstances to which we were subjected, through the heartlessness of those who were allowed to wrong and oppress the weak, etc., and wondering when these trials would cease or where our lots were to be cast, etc. We were going on in this strain while washing the dust from our hands and faces preparatory to getting dinner. But our conversation came to a sudden stop, for as I went to the tent door to dash out some water, who should I see but a young stranger standing in a listening attitude by the side of his carriage, which stood hardly a yard away from our tent. He looked up as I threw out the water, and I felt my cheeks crimson as our eyes met; and I made a hasty retreat, wondering who he was and what we had said that he could take advantage of, if so disposed. Neither of us were aware of the Col.'s arrival in camp, and this young man looked a mere stripling, being delicate in form as well as features. But we soon learned who he was. He came, as it were, like an angel of mercy, and one whom the Lord, no doubt, raised up to act as a mediator in behalf of a homeless and afflicted people.

In the trouble of 1858, called the "Mormon Rebellion," but more correctly "Buchanan's Blunder [the Utah War]," Col. Kane appeared again as an ambassador, though he was then in feeble health and worn down with travel. At the conclusion of Governor Young's remarks in their council, he said, "Friend Thomas, the Lord sent you here and He will not let you die—no, you cannot die till your work is done. I want to have your name live to all eternity. You have done a great work, and you will do a greater work still." Afterwards when asked by Elder Staines why he wished to be introduced as Dr. Osborne, he replied, "My dear friend, I was once treated so kindly at Winter Quarters that I am sensitive over its memories. I knew you to be a good people then, but since I have heard so many hard things about you, that I thought I would like to convince myself whether or not the people possessed the same humane and hospitable spirit that I found in them once. I thought, if I go to any of my great friends of Winter Quarters, they will treat me as Thomas L. Kane, with a remembrance of some services which I may have rendered



Col. Thomas L. Kane (1822–83), attorney, humanitarian, and friend of the Mormons. Utah State Historical Society.

(Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 1994). The passage of the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act has assured better protection than before of Indian burial lodges and mounds throughout America.

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them. So I requested to be sent to some stranger's house as 'Dr. Osborne,' that I might know how the Mormon people would treat a stranger at such a moment as this, without knowing whether I might not turn out to be either an enemy or a spy. And now, Mr. Staines, I want to know if you could have treated Thomas L. Kane better than you have treated Dr. Osborne?"

"No, Col.," he replied, "I could not." "And thus, my friend," added Dr. Osborne, "I have proved that the Mormons will treat the stranger in Salt Lake City, as they once did Thomas L. Kane at Winter Quarters."

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THURSDAY THE 6TH

Remained here to-day – Brigham came up with us, and encamped a short distance off – He, Bro. K. and others took a ride out this afternoon to see the country ahead – did not go very far, visited some springs in the woods a mile or two from here Some of the boys to-day dug into the before-mentioned mound, where they found the “skeleton form” of an Indian apparently having been buried for some time – they also found with it, quite a quantity of beads brass trinkets, &c. which formerly in life had adorned his person He [Kane] has carefully wrapt up the bones, and the cranium, which he intends taking with him to Philadelphia for the inspection of some professional friend of his who is versed in the science of Craniology. The boys received the sum of two dollars, divided among them for their services in digging – Forgot to mention, that the day we came here, Bro. K. arranged Sarah Ann's wagon and my own travel between father's and his own company, and in this order we have encamped between the two companies – The ring of wagons being too small to admit any more wagons in it, a number are encamped on the outside of it – Bro. Cahoon is encamped only two or three rods behind our wagons – Don Carlos [Whitney] is quite sick – father and mother gaining rapidly –

FRIDAY THE 7TH

Warm and pleasant – We remained here to-day also – A council held to-day in Bro. Grant's tent – the result was that we are to remain where we are, as no more more *[sic]* commodious a place can be found, and form in a hollow square⁶⁶ – Helen not very well this evening – Don C. getting better – This morning about 3 o'clock Bro D. Cahoon's wife brought forth a daughter into the world – Forgot to mention that 12 men were chosen by the Council this morning, as a committee to act for and make arrangements in behalf of the camp, who are to see executed the orders of the Council make arrangements for the winter &c. &c.– John D.

66. As they had in Kirtland and Nauvoo, church leaders organized a municipal high council in both the Winter Quarters (Nebraska) encampment and another across the river in Pottawattamie County (Iowa). However, no stake was organized on either side of the river, a clear indication that the church intended to move west the following spring and not to remain any longer than necessary at the Missouri. Each Council exercised jurisdiction over both temporal and spiritual affairs.

took two yoke of oxen and went back to the Big Springs, our former camping place, after Bro. Clayton

SATURDAY THE 8TH

Still warm and sultry – To-day the wagons were arranged as contemplated in the form of a hollow square – this bro't us still farther on the hill, and a considerable greater distance from water – Bro. Clayton arrived this afternoon – Father's and Bro. K's companies occupy one end entire of the square – to-day the teams were engaged in hauling trees to make a bowery the whole length of our wagons, which we worked at till past 11 o'clock in the night, and nearly completed – trees were also drawn for the purpose of building a bower in the center of the square – they also intend fencing in the camp so that the cattle can not get inside – there are also yards are [*sic*] to be built for them – after these things are done, it is the intention to commence cutting hay for winter – there was a lamb run over by one of our wagons while moving to-day, and broke his leg – this is the second time within a week, we have been indebted to accident for fresh meat –

SUNDAY THE 9TH

Beautiful morning – This morning, Bro. K. called his family together to hold a private family meeting.⁶⁷ There were a number of others however attended. Bro. K. spoke at some

67. In the absence of regular church-sponsored meetings or church houses in the Missouri River wilderness, the so-called Camp of Israel was divided into large, spiritually adopted family units such as the Young, Kimball, Richards, and other “family tribes” for instruction, guidance, partaking of the sacrament, and occasionally, as in this instance, for reproach and chastisement. Held rarely while toiling across Iowa due to their scattered and woe-be-gone condition, such family assemblies became much more common at Winter Quarters than ever before in church history. Thus the early vanguard companies of the Mormon exodus were far more than a string of pioneers and wagons traveling indiscriminately; rather, they were characterized by extended family units or tribes, living and moving together under strong patriarchal, priesthood, and family governing authority, all under the ultimate direction of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

The law of adoption, in which faithful Saints were sealed or connected by a temple-centered priesthood ordinance to a prophet, apostle, or some other major church leader instead of to one's own ancestors, goes back in church history to at least Nauvoo. In the very early days of the church, when so many were joining without parent or family support, it was unclear how one could be safely sealed to deceased ancestors who were not members of the church. Not until President Wilford Woodruff's 1893 revelation ending the law of adoption was this practice finally revoked in favor of being sealed to one's direct progenitors. And later, with Joseph F. Smith's 1918 Vision of the Dead in which he taught that the work of redemption in the spirit world would obviate many obstacles to conversion in that sphere, the impulse to be sealed to one's own ancestors became stronger than ever before. This perception holds sway in the church to this day. See more in the introduction. For the finest scholarly work on this sometimes confusing topic, see Gordon Irving, “The Law of Adoption: One Phase of the Development of the Mormon Concept of Salvation, 1830–1900,” *BYU Studies* 14 (Spring 1974): 291–314. See also Jonathan S. Stapley, “Adoptive Sealing Ritual in Mormonism,” *Journal of Mormon History* 37, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 53–117. For a more specific look at how the law of adoption was practiced in Winter Quarters, see Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 91–95.

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length – he spoke particularly of dissensions existing in his family – that some of the female members had spoken against him, and endeavored to propagate slanders concerning one another, and he rebuked such a spirit in the name of the Lord, and said that any person persisting in that course should not remain in his family, for he would not have them about him – and furthermore, that they should be cursed. He said he had borne such things long enough, and he would not bear them any longer – He spoke of the folly of people wishing for death for the sake of getting out of trouble and going to Heaven, when if they should have their wish they would go immediately to hell, and be damned, for every person is bound to create his own heavenly happiness by his conduct here on earth Bro. K. was followed by Father [Bishop Newel K. Whitney] and Bro. Grant, who spoke at some length in corroboration of what he had said – the sacrament was then administered, and the meeting dismissed – Council meeting was held at the new-made meeting ground in the grove where we calculate to winter – Brigham spoke at some length concerning the twelve men who were chosen to form a Church Council, and were to act as City Council, also, high council to the Church – Bro. Cutler was appointed the president thereof by a unanimous vote Samuel Russel the Clerk, and Horace S. Eldridge Marshall – President Young named our wintering



MORMON TABERNACLE CAMP.

Mormon Tabernacle Camp, Harper's Monthly, April 1853. This camp was most likely at Cutler's Park, forerunner of Winter Quarters, fall 1846. Utah State Historical Society.

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place “Cutler’s Park”⁶⁸ – The clerk then read a letter written to President [James K.] Polk – vote unanimous for it to be sent – the expediency of remaining in large camps was spoken, as affording less chance for the natives to rob and plunder upon us – also the propriety of securing the permission of the Lamanite chiefs, before cutting their timber – Colonel Kane is quite sick and has moved out a little way on to the prairie by himself –

MONDAY THE 10TH

Fine and pleasant – this morning, some of the people constituting this end of the camp, and those immediately belonging to Bro. K’s family were called together for the purpose of making arrangements about cutting hay for the winter – the calculation was made to cut 800 tons, which divided among the 64 men which were counted, made 12 ½ tons apiece – there were also estimated 350 head of cattle, 31 horses and mules, and 48 sheep – To-day we busied ourselves in completing our fence on this end of the ground, and in finishing the bowery – the fence round the whole camp is not yet done Colonel Kane was bro’t again into camp last evening, very ill indeed – he was taken to Bro. Grant’s tent – John Green is taking care of him – 40 wagons (including Bros. [Henry] Herriman’s and Pack’s families, who went on to the Elk Horn some time ago, []) came up here –

TUESDAY THE 11TH

Same weather – Busied ourselves to-day in cutting and drawing houselogs, and one or two commenced digging a well – we are building a house for the purpose of storing away provisions &c., that we may have the use of our wagons to haul hay with &c. &c.– A council of a number of the Twelve and the authorities of the Church, was held at father’s tent this evening, respecting our arrangements for the winter &c., &c.– Saw Bro Parley this morning – 25 men were lately appointed to stand on guard night and day to keep the cattle out of the woods that they may not get into the pea-vines, which we depend upon considerably for our cattle this winter

68. While awaiting final word on the Grand Island plan, those pioneers already upon the west side of the Missouri River stopped at a temporary resting place, recommended by George Miller, on the Petit Papillion Creek, which they called Cold Springs. Situated four miles northwest of the ferry landing, and fifteen miles above Bellevue, Cold Springs served as a temporary camp headquarters in July 1846. Once the Mormons decided to winter at the Missouri, they sought a more suitable winter campsite, and Cold Springs became ever more crowded with new arrivals. In August they discovered a more acceptable campsite on higher ground, fourteen miles north of Cold Springs and three miles west of the Missouri River. Called Cutler’s Park after Alpheus Cutler, the site was situated on a raised prairie among the gently rolling steppe lands, 2.5 miles west of the Missouri. See Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri*, 68. Local historian Gail Holmes has conducted a tremendous amount of research on site locations in and around Winter Quarters. For just one of his several excellent works, see *Old Council Bluffs: Mormon Developments, 1846–1853 in the Missouri and Platte River Valleys of SW Iowa and E Nebraska* (Omaha: LDS Institute of Religion, 2000). See also BYU: College of Life Sciences, Brigham Young University, “Winter Quarters,” winterquarters.byu.edu/Settlements/Nebraska.

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WEDNESDAY THE 12TH

Cool and pleasant – the people collected this morning between this and Brigham’s camp, to receive letters from their friends in the army [Mormon Battalion] – our camp as well as Brigham’s now completely fenced in, and the well is in a fair state of progress – Colonel Kane yet quite sick with the fever – he has sent, or talked of sending to Fort Leavenworth, after a physician of his acquaintance –

THURSDAY THE 13TH

On waking this morning found it raining, which, however did not last long – A meeting was called this evening, in the center of the square, and captains and foremen of divisions, and companies chosen for the purpose of superintending the cutting of hay – their names the names [*sic*] or parties 16 companies read over. Bro. K’s and father’s companies constitute the 1st division of the 2^d company of the whole camp of Israel. A report from the council was then read by Bro. Grant, requesting the people to turn out en masse to morrow-morning, gather in all their cattle, yoke them, let them remain in the yards until further orders, meanwhile furnish them with newly cut grass – also to sharpen their scythes and axes, and hold themselves in readiness to commence the work of haying

FRIDAY THE 14TH

Fine and pleasant – Pursuant to the arrangement last evening, most of the men, this morning were engaged hunting up, yoking and confining their cattle in yards, &c.– Bro. King, [Louis] Dana, and myself went to a small creek or ravine, about 2 miles back to assist the girls in washing – returned home at night very tired – during our absence the boys drew a load of hay, built up the store-house nearly 5 logs high &c.– The well they did not work at to-day – they dug at it yesterday and day before, and have sunk it to the depth of 28 feet without finding water –

Some of the brethren went to cutting and drawing house logs, and one or two commenced digging a well. In two days they had dug to the depth of twenty-eight feet without finding water. They also commenced building a house for the purpose of storing away provisions and other things, that they might have the use of the wagons to haul hay with, etc.

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SATURDAY THE 15TH

To-day, the brethren busied themselves still in driving in the cattle from the woods, &c.–

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SUNDAY THE 16TH

Fine day – this morning, a meeting held in the woods, about 1 mile and a half from here – also one in the afternoon – Father talks of soon going to St. Louis⁶⁹ – Porter arrived this evening, after an absence of 4 or 5 months, 10 days from Nauvoo – he was lately liberated at Galena, no one appearing against him – He bro't a watch of mine back, which he took with him to get repaired, when he last left us. Bro't also a number of [Hancock County] "Eagles," issued July 31st and letters but none for me – In the paper is announced the death of its late editor Dr. W[illia]m. E. Matlock, of whom the obituary notice speaks in the highest and most praiseworthy terms

69. Newel K. Whitney, presiding bishop of the church, was dispatched to St. Louis in late 1846 to purchase in bulk needed supplies from famous outfitting warehouses in St. Louis. These included burrstones for the flourmill, hardware merchandise, boots and shoes, clothing, textiles, grain, and other necessities, which eventually were sold in the Whitney store in Winter Quarters at favorable prices comparable to those in the East.